



**HAL**  
open science

# The Collaboration of Lewis Carroll and Harry Furniss: illustrating the Sylvie and Bruno books

Christine Collière-Whiteside

► **To cite this version:**

Christine Collière-Whiteside. The Collaboration of Lewis Carroll and Harry Furniss: illustrating the Sylvie and Bruno books. Recto/Verso, 2008, La Création en Collaboration, 3, [http://www.revuerectoverso.com/spip.php?page=numero&id\\_rubrique=39](http://www.revuerectoverso.com/spip.php?page=numero&id_rubrique=39). halshs-01111894

**HAL Id: halshs-01111894**

**<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-01111894>**

Submitted on 31 Jan 2015

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

## THE COLLABORATION OF LEWIS CARROLL AND HARRY FURNISS ILLUSTRATING THE *SYLVIE AND BRUNO* BOOKS

Christine COLLIÈRE

“Bruno’s Revenge”, the little tale which constitutes the nucleus of Lewis Carroll’s novel *Sylvie and Bruno*, was written and published in June 1867. As early as 1874, Carroll had formed the project of expanding the story into a child’s book, and asked Henry Holiday if he would illustrate it<sup>1</sup>. Yet the two volumes of the novel, *Sylvie and Bruno* and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, would only be published in 1889 and 1893. For more than ten years, the writing up of the novel was at a standstill while Carroll kept looking for a suitable illustrator<sup>2</sup>, merely accumulating material for the story until Harry Furniss finally agreed to take up the task at the beginning of March 1885<sup>3</sup>.

The work Furniss was undertaking to illustrate was not at all a finished novel, as is the usual custom, but a text in progress, hardly written up yet. A few days after Furniss had agreed, Carroll wrote to him: “I have a considerable mass of chaotic materials for a story, but have never had the heart to go and construct the story as a whole, owing to its seeming so hopeless that I should ever find a suitable artist. Now that *you* are found...”<sup>4</sup>. It would be more than two years before Carroll could tell him: “I have the *backbone* of the book complete, and all the incidents and scenes arranged”<sup>5</sup>, by which time Furniss had already completed eleven pictures<sup>6</sup> and was working on at least five more<sup>7</sup>, while most of the text was still scattered notes.

The nine-year collaboration between Carroll and Furniss was thus intended as a true partnership, with text and illustrations being written and drawn simultaneously. The only surviving materials documenting this genesis are Carroll’s private diaries, now published in their entirety by Edward Wakeling, the correspondence between Carroll and his illustrators (Tenniel, Holiday, Frost, Furniss and Gertrude Thomson), including numerous sketches, published in 2003 by Morton Cohen and Edward Wakeling, and the correspondence between Carroll and the house of Macmillan. They nonetheless allow a reconstitution of the genesis of the novel which throws a light on this collaboration and on Carroll’s mode of creation<sup>8</sup>.

The association of text and illustration goes back to Carroll’s first writings in the family magazines: half of *Useful and Instructive Poetry*, the first of those magazines, is occupied by pictures, and most of the texts in *The Rectory Umbrella* and *Mischmasch* are illustrated, though pictures were less frequent in *The Rectory Magazine*<sup>9</sup>. When Carroll published poems for the first time, in *The Comic Times* and *The Train*, he also sent some pictures, but decided not to offer any more after they were rejected as “not up to the mark”<sup>10</sup>. Instead, he took to sending detailed suggestions for illustrations to the artist employed by *The Train*, successfully this time, as he noted in his diary:

Finished and sent “The Path of Roses” to Mr. Yates for the *Train*. At the same time I suggested a subject for an illustration, basing it on the concluding lines of the poem. The lady standing near the window where the sun’s last rays are streaming in: at the other side the vision of the hospital-scene fading into the darkness, and already so faint that the furniture etc. behind are beginning to be visible through it.  
[inserted in No. 5. May 1856 with an illustration by Bennett as suggested]<sup>11</sup>.

The same would happen with the publication of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. Famously, Carroll started writing down the tale for Alice Liddell, after improvising stories on several occasions for her and her sisters. Having completed the text and some of the pictures<sup>12</sup>, he lent the manuscript of what was then entitled *Alice’s Adventures under Ground*<sup>13</sup> to various friends who suggested the story should be published. At first, he wanted to use his own illustrations, tried his hand at drawing on wood, and went as far as getting a wood-engraver from Camden Town to cut the blocks<sup>14</sup>. It was only because his drawings were deemed unsatisfactory that he finally decided to ask Tenniel to illustrate the book for him for publication<sup>15</sup>. It was nonetheless difficult for him to abandon his initial idea of illustrating the book himself: in 1864, while expanding the text of *Under Ground* into *Wonderland* and

working with Tenniel, he still finished the illustrations in the manuscript of *Under Ground* to present it to Alice Liddell. He would eventually publish a facsimile of this booklet in 1886, thus accomplishing his initial project of a work entirely created by himself<sup>16</sup>. The re-appropriation of the book goes even further: nine ink drawings that had belonged to Alice Liddell, faithfully copying some of Tenniel's illustrations for *Wonderland* and taken from episodes which were not part of *Under Ground*, have been identified as being in Carroll's hand rather than Tenniel's<sup>17</sup>. Carroll probably presented them to Alice in 1865, as if to narrow the gap between *Under Ground* which was his own creation, and *Wonderland*, in which another artist had also had a hand.

By the time the *Sylvie and Bruno* project had been formed, Carroll had worked with Henry Holiday for *The Hunting of the Snark* and Arthur Frost for *A Tangled Tale* and was not talking of illustrating his works himself anymore. Nonetheless, illustrations were still fully part of his creative process and he was unable to write unless he had secured the collaboration of a suitable artist. In 1876, talking about the future *Sylvie and Bruno*, then only a project, he wrote to George Craik, Macmillan's partner: "Please keep a look-out among illustrated books, and let me know if you see any artist at all worthy of succeeding to Tenniel's place. I should *much* like to write one more child's book before all writing-power leaves me"<sup>18</sup>. The problem was the same in 1883, as a diary entry testifies to it: "Heard from Mr Caldecott, who... is too deeply engaged to undertake anything at present. I must try and engage him for some future time, and could then feel encouraged to work definitely at a new book"<sup>19</sup>. Tenniel had accepted the job upon seeing the manuscript of *Under Ground*, while Carroll was famous enough by the time he asked Furniss to illustrate *Sylvie and Bruno* for Furniss to accept without seeing any text. Yet, in the end, both artists had to illustrate a work in progress. Carroll started modifying and expanding his story as soon as Tenniel accepted. In one of the few letters from Tenniel to Carroll to have survived, Tenniel had to ask: "Could you manage to let me have the text of 'A Mad Tea-party' for a day or two? There is much more in it than my copy contains"<sup>20</sup>. The episode of the mad tea-party was not present in *Under Ground*, and Tenniel's complaint shows that Carroll did not simply send Tenniel new chapters as he completed them, but kept modifying them so that Tenniel was constantly working on unfinished versions, Carroll telling him about the changes he was making as he went along.

Furniss seems to have been willing to encourage a true collaboration between artist and writer. In his autobiography, he praised Carroll for his eagerness to discuss illustrations, comparing him to Dickens: "Few authors are as conscientious as Dickens was, or, in fact, care to consult with their illustrators at all. In operatic work the librettist and composer must work hand in hand. Should not the artist do likewise?"<sup>21</sup>. On the back of the first sketches he sent Carroll, for the poem "Peter and Paul", he added a few notes for Carroll and left a space for him to reply, thus initiating the dialogue. Carroll was only too happy to comply, not only commenting on the sketches but sending some of his own as well<sup>22</sup>. The system of using the back of sketches for discussion was not continued, but moved on to the letters, in which Carroll discusses at length all the pictures sent by Furniss, either mere sketches or completed pictures, adding numerous sketches of his own in the margins or on separate sheets to show what he has in mind.

There are many instances of Carroll asking Furniss for his opinion before modifying details of the text if this makes the picture better. Thus, in the passage when Bruno is playing music on a cluster of flowers, Carroll offered: "If you ... think it would look better to have more than a single spray of hare-bells, I'll strike out the words about there being only *one* spray of them within reach"<sup>23</sup>. It is certainly more important to him that the text and pictures should not be in contradiction, than that Furniss should respect the text scrupulously, as many changes in small details such as furniture show<sup>24</sup>. Carroll sometimes complains of Furniss not respecting the text and giving him extra work in re-writing, but that seems to happen mainly when he is pressed for time, trying to publish a volume before Christmas<sup>25</sup>. The scene of the Court of Dogland, with dogs of various breeds as courtiers, is an example of productive collaboration. Carroll sent some text to Furniss, leaving him to decide whether they should be dressed or not, and suggesting some flexibility: "By the way, *have* Newfoundland long ears? I have made Bruno tie the King's ears under his chin. If they haven't, perhaps the King had better be a bloodhound; or I could erase the sentence"<sup>26</sup>. In the end, although some of the incidents must have been in Carroll's initial text (the description of a greyhound is mentioned on September 21,

1889), it seems Furniss chose the breeds of the different dogs as suited him best and then sent a list identifying them so that Carroll could amend the text accordingly<sup>27</sup>.

This flexibility is partly due to the specificity of the nonsense genre, in which the randomness of the elements brought together is more important than the things themselves: “In the ‘cupboard’ picture, pray don’t consider yourself to be strictly bound to the articles mentioned in the text. If you can think of other things, which will be yet *more* incongruous, and *less* likely to be found in a cupboard, I daresay it would improve the picture”<sup>28</sup>. Thus, Furniss was also asked to choose the stanzas he liked best among the “Little Birds” stanzas from “The Pig’s Tale” and to put them in the order he preferred, as the meaning, or rather the absence of meaning would not be affected<sup>29</sup>.

Similarly, in nonsense verse, scansion or pattern is more important than meaning. The character of the Carpenter in “The Walrus and the Carpenter” might have been entirely different if Tenniel had so wished: “...when [Mr Tenniel] remonstrated against ‘The Walrus and the Carpenter’ as a hopeless combination, and begged to have the ‘carpenter’ abolished... I remember offering ‘baronet’ and ‘butterfly’... but he finally chose ‘carpenter’”<sup>30</sup>. Furniss was offered a similar alternative when he was illustrating “The Gardener’s Song”: “As to ‘Albatross’: If any other trisyllable will suit you better, please let me know. It can be a ‘cormorant’, or a ‘dragon-fly,’ etc., so long as the accent falls on the *first* syllable”<sup>31</sup>.

To a certain extent, illustrations preceded the writing of the text and must have inspired it. After illustrating a few incidental poems, Furniss had to work on the main characters even though he wouldn’t receive any of the text of the main story until the end of September 1887<sup>32</sup>. Thus, Carroll already wanted him to start imagining Bruno in September 1885: “Can you find a really *pretty* boy of 5 or 6, to make studies of his face in different positions? If so, we might *begin* on a little of the story itself”<sup>33</sup>. Carroll’s letters were full of discussions of the appearance he wanted for his heroes, down to the smallest details of their facial features and expressions: “As to Lady Muriel, would you mind *not* giving her an aquiline nose? I don’t admire it in young ladies, but much prefer a ‘tip-tilted’ one. Though perhaps *straight* is best”<sup>34</sup>. Carroll ventured very few sketches concerning the “serious” characters, which he found most difficult to draw: “my attempts at children are melancholy failures”<sup>35</sup>. He insisted on Furniss using real life sitters, showered him with addresses of sitters and photos or drawings of models, and seems to have strongly believed that the appearance of a person reflected directly their personality. Having sent Furniss some photos of a young girl, he commented:

She is a very sweet-natured girl, with plenty of life and good abilities, I should think. All that would do well for “Lady Muriel”. But I am not intimate with her, and do not know if she has the depth of thought (specially of religious thought) that I imagine Lady Muriel to have. But [photo] No. 4 looks to me quite the expression I should expect Lady Muriel to have while discussing some serious subject<sup>36</sup>.

It is as if Carroll was trying to share his inspiration directly with Furniss, so that both pictures and text would spring from the same source, rather than the illustrations being based on the text only. Barely a month before sending Furniss some passages from the main story for the first time, Carroll thought it necessary to come to describe orally to Furniss the characters and the story: “I can *describe* to you, and you can take such notes as you need, the subject of any number of pictures you may like to have on hand, even though the actual text belonging to them is not finished”<sup>37</sup>. This was done in such detail that they agreed on no fewer than 64 subjects for pictures<sup>38</sup>, and Carroll wrote a few days later: “even when the pictures are done, I shall be in no hurry about the text”<sup>39</sup>.

Rather than the true partnership Furniss had tried to instigate, probably not expecting Carroll to respond so fully to his invitation to comment his sketches and drawings, the relationship between the two men quickly turned in favour of Carroll. His remarks on Furniss’ first drawings, for “Peter and Paul”, “the Three Badgers” or “the Pig’s Tale” for example, show his real ability to imagine effective and comical pictures, suggesting solutions to show the passing of time, ensure variety in the position of the characters and give them expressive faces<sup>40</sup> or to clothe animal characters while retaining enough zoological accuracy: “I think animals, treated as animals *only*, are very hard to depict comically... So I would suggest dressing the pig as a fat farmer, and the camel as a tourist (he *might* have a knapsack on his back, which would be suggestive of a hump)”<sup>41</sup>. Most of these suggestions were adopted by Furniss and very soon (except for the “serious” pictures set in the Victorian world, as <http://www.revuerectoverso.com>

we have seen) Furniss seems to have “merely [put] bad drawing into good”<sup>42</sup>, to borrow Carroll’s own words, as the comparison between Carroll’s sketches and Furniss’ final illustrations clearly shows. Although Carroll regularly protests that his ideas are mere suggestions and tries not to hurt the susceptibility of his artist, his knowledge of drawing, printing and publishing allows him to control all aspects of the illustrating process. Characteristically, the fiercest row, which actually threatened to put an end to the collaboration, happened when Carroll ventured to disagree on a technical point, Furniss’ only remaining preserve, arguing that the proportions of the child’s body in the “Sylvie and Beetle” picture were wrong<sup>43</sup>.

Although most of the correspondence available today is Carroll’s side, it is quite clear that Furniss never made comments on the text, unlike Tenniel who was responsible for the omission of a whole chapter from *Through the Looking-Glass*, “The Wasp in a Wig”, after he complained he did not care for it and thought it impossible to illustrate<sup>44</sup>. Most of the modifications originated by Furniss are caused by his mistakes. They are usually minor, except for two changes. In the first volume, Furniss drew the Professor’s “umbrella boots” the wrong way, as they were intended for “upward rain”, and Carroll had to alter the text to “horizontal weather”<sup>45</sup>, which is not as satisfactory. As this happened only a month before publication, Carroll probably complied because time was running out. The other change was an important modification in the order of events during the final banquet for which Carroll complained bitterly<sup>46</sup>. Again, it happened just before publication.

By forcing Carroll to explain to the artist what he wants from him, the collaboration with Furniss acts as a decomposing prism which separates the pictorial components from the textual ones in Carroll’s creative process. Carroll’s characters are hardly described at all, whether they are fairyland creatures such as Sylvie and Bruno, or Victorian characters such as Lady Muriel, Arthur or the Earl. When Lady Muriel is introduced, for instance, Carroll uses a whole array of dodges to avoid detailing her appearance. She is first mockingly taken for a typical heroine (“—a young and lovely lady! ... And this is, of course, the opening scene of Vol. I. *She* is the Heroine. And *I* am one of those subordinate characters that only turn up when needed for the development of her destiny”)<sup>47</sup>, then turns out to be wearing a veil, before the narrator falls asleep trying to imagine her face. On the other hand, numerous letters show how extremely fastidious Carroll was about the way she and Sylvie looked on Furniss’ pictures, in which they not only had to be perfectly ladylike but to correspond exactly to the image Carroll had in mind. Similarly, a recurrent criticism in Carroll’s letters to Furniss is that the children, Sylvie, Bruno and Uggug, do not look the exact age he wants for them: “Another objection is that so small a face makes her look *older* than I want. It makes her look, to my eyes, more like 15 than 12, the age I want her to look like”<sup>48</sup>. Yet in the text, the age of Bruno (who’s only described as “the little fellow”) is not given while Sylvie is said to be “four or five years older than Bruno” and Uggug “about the same age”, which does not tell the reader much<sup>49</sup>.

Thus, the pictures are essential in bringing to life the characters while the text takes care mainly of the stories and dialogues. In spite of Carroll’s criticism of the typical Victorian novel heroine, he relies a great deal on stereotypes. Secondary characters seldom have names and are mostly designated by the class of character they belong to. We thus have “the Speaker”, also called “the pompous man”, “the metaphysical young lady”, that is the blue-stocking, the virtuoso pianist whose playing is devoid of feeling, or the teetotaller<sup>50</sup>. Furniss, who as a *Punch* cartoonist was skilled at character caricature, accordingly drew on a stock of theatrical attitudes and clichés. Willie, his wife and the farmer’s wife are stereotypical working-class characters without any depth<sup>51</sup>, and Carroll’s directions for the picture of little Bessie, the farmer’s daughter, remind one of stage representations of rural characters: “Again I venture on a sketch. Bessie’s legs are rather unintelligible. What I *mean* is, socks, and then bare leg. I think you’ll find little rustics dressed so. And one sock or other usually needs pulling up!”<sup>52</sup>.

The characterisation of Mein Herr combines the use of both pictures and stereotype, succeeding in creating an important character in spite of his appearing on two occasions only, very late in the novel, and despite his not taking any part in the main story, his function being solely that of a story-teller. When he appears for the first time, Mein Herr is only described as: “the venerable old man—a German, obviously”<sup>53</sup>, where the adverb is characteristic of Carroll’s reliance on stereotypes. Later in the text, a few details are used repeatedly to evoke him, the long beard, mild eyes and huge glasses. On the contrary, Carroll’s letters to Furniss insist on details of Mein Herr’s clothes which are

not mentioned in the text: “He should have his *hat* on, I think, as the scene is out of doors. A lady-friend, who has I think been in Germany, tells me the ordinary German gentleman wears a brown straw hat with a curly brim, and a lightish-coloured frock-coat double-breasted, and buttoned up”<sup>54</sup>. In fact, Carroll is borrowing from the Victorian stereotype of the German professor, which he had already used in *Euclid and his Modern Rivals* (1879), when he created the character of Herr Niemand and whose salient features include beards, neglect of personal dress and the bearing of a funny name, as well as vanity, the lack of a sense of humour, and a tendency to scientific generalisation regardless of concrete reality<sup>55</sup>.

Using widely known types of characters —or, as in the *Alice* books, nursery rhyme characters and cards or chess figures— exempted Carroll from providing descriptions and worked well with comical characters. On the other hand, this is one of the major failures of the book when it comes to serious characters, whether they are secondary characters such as Willie and his wife or the old man from Fayfield Junction<sup>56</sup>, or main characters such as Lady Muriel, Arthur and the Earl, as in fact, they seem to come straight from sentimental and edifying Victorian novels. Indeed, the story’s mawkishness and lack of unity are the two main flaws pointed out by contemporary and later critics. The text tells the reader nothing of the character’s backgrounds, personal histories and personalities, and in the case of secondary characters, their appearance is confined to one chapter, bearing no relation to the main story except for the fact that the narrator happens to meet them. Indeed Carroll seems to have overestimated how much of a character’s personality a picture could convey. For instance, although Eric Lindon is given next to no dialogue, and Arthur mainly long lectures on serious points of religion, Carroll expected Furniss’ illustrations to show that Arthur was “a grand, noble character”, “poetical in face, capable of intelligent interest in any subject, and of being a passionate lover”, while Eric was “much shallower, good-natured, and with no harm in him, but not much *thought*, or anything else, though of course many degrees better than an idiotic ‘masher’”<sup>57</sup>.

Carroll described the writing of the *Sylvie and Bruno* books as first the accumulation of “odds-and-ends”, “all sorts of odd ideas, and fragments of dialogue” as well as poems and tales such as “Bruno’s Revenge” and “Bruno’s Picnic”, and then the invention of a story to “string together” these fragments<sup>58</sup>. Although the correspondence with Furniss presents a biased image of the genesis of the book, as it concentrates on the passages which were the object of an illustration, and may thus add to the impression of fragmentation, a careful reconstitution of the different stages of the genesis of the novel shows that Carroll’s account was accurate. Indeed, the two storylines, alternating as the narrator, an old man with a heart condition which makes him repeatedly and abruptly fall in a trancelike state in which he visits Outland, are but a pretext to introduce different tales, conceits and puns as well as serious lectures and edifying stories. The only purpose of the love story set in Victorian England is to bring together different characters for discussions in the manner of Thomas Love Peacock, and it is particularly weak. Eric Lindon, for instance, is no more than a secondary character while he is supposed to undergo an important conversion from atheism to belief in the power of prayer in the course of the novel.

The *Alice* books were already organised in a fragmented way, Alice wandering from one corner of the Wonderland garden to another, or jumping from square to square on the Looking-Glass chessboard. *A Tangled Tale* is a collection of fictionalised problems and *The Hunting of the Snark* a series of “fits”. The overall storylines are not the most prominent feature either: though Alice is on a quest for the beautiful gardens she has glimpsed, she is ready to stop and chat with anyone she meets. In *Sylvie and Bruno*, the plots are also quite perfunctory. The study of the genesis of the novel suggests that the heterogeneous and fragmented nature of Carroll’s writings is not so much a deliberate attempt to emulate Sterne and debunk the Victorian organic novel than a consequence of his writing method of piecing together short disparate texts instead of writing in a consecutive manner. It also suggests that Carroll saw the novel as a series of scenes rather than a continuous story, which allowed him to settle on a surprisingly high number of subjects for illustration (64, when the final published book contains 83 different ones) very early in the genesis when little of the text was yet written<sup>59</sup>.

An 1866 letter to Tom Taylor gives us an insight into Carroll’s inspiration, as he jots down his first ideas for a play, “Morning Clouds”, triggered —characteristically— by his seeing the actor Percy Roselle on stage<sup>60</sup>. Instead of telling the story (by his own avowal, very similar to *Oliver Twist*), what

Carroll describes first, and in great detail, are two tableaux which, though incidental scenes in the plot, visually symbolise the tragic situation. The first one, for instance, shows the stolen child “wandering in London in the winter’s night (snow falling)” and singing under the windows of the house where his mother is sitting in a “warm, bright interior”, both unaware of the presence and identity of each other<sup>61</sup>. Only then does Carroll give the general plot, which is very sketchy, as he himself was aware of: “I have no very distinct idea what ought to become of the villain... I doubt if this sketch includes characters and plot enough for a whole drama. You would probably find it necessary to work a second thread into the web, throughout”<sup>62</sup>. Carroll’s creative process as a writer, perceiving narratives as a series of climactic scenes encapsulating different stages in the storyline, proceeded on the same visual mode as that of Carroll the photographer<sup>63</sup>, whose pictures often told a story (to take only one example, see the portrait of his brother Edwin as “The Young Mathematician” (1857), who’s fallen asleep on his slate)<sup>64</sup>.

Allan C. Dooley shows how the introduction of a new stage in the printing process, the printing of the galley proofs, or “slips”, before the page proofs, brought a greater freedom to Victorian writers in the corrections they could make on proof sheets, as the constraints of layout intervened later in the composing and printing process<sup>65</sup>. Carroll fully availed himself of this freedom and had bits of text printed in disorder as early as the summer of 1887<sup>66</sup>, when the text was far from being written out, as he described to a friend:

I write a bit in one part of the book, then a bit in another part, and so on, all consecutively, and send it off to the printer, to be set up in slip, and re-arranged hereafter. Once, when I jumped, out of one of the *last* chapters, into one of the early ones, he wrote, in the margin of the MS, “Is there not some want of connection here?”!!! I should rather think there *was*<sup>67</sup>!

He would then cut and paste these pieces of paper himself to make a volume: “I spent a good deal of yesterday in mounting ‘slip’ of *Sylvie and Bruno* on sheets of paper. My idea is to make up the whole book in that way, partly in print, and partly in MS., before troubling the printers again”<sup>68</sup>. He made a similar volume, alongside with a synopsis of the novel, for Furniss<sup>69</sup>, and the process was repeated for the second volume<sup>70</sup>. This method was used until just before publishing: in September 1889, he still describes his work as “arranging and completing the text”<sup>71</sup> and “[writing in] some portions of dialogue”<sup>72</sup>. Such a technique had already been used in 1864 when he worked on his *Guide to the Mathematical Student*, using his *Syllabus of Plane Algebraical Geometry* as a basis: “A day or two ago I cut up 2 copies of my ‘Syllabus,’ and filed the whole, with some additional MS. to serve as scaffolding for the book. It seems an excellent plan”<sup>73</sup>. It must be noted that the purpose of this working volume was not to work on the layout and the placing of the pictures on the pages, as the comparison of the page numbers in this booklet (quoted by Carroll in the letters) and the final page numbers in the published book shows a discrepancy.

Rather, this working volume enhances Carroll’s need to handle a concrete object, to write in a space reproducing the organisation of a book, integrating the pictures and the layout from the beginning rather than creating a virtual text on a linear mode. Many passages of the *Sylvie and Bruno* books began, like the *Alice* books, as stories improvised for children which he would illustrate as he told them. One of those improvised illustrations survives and shows how the sheet was first divided in squares to map out the story<sup>74</sup>, so that the story-teller visualised the whole tale at one glance. From his first “publications” in the family magazines, pictures and layout were part of the writing process and this technique shaped his future works. The manuscript of *Under Ground* shows great skill at writing within constraints of layout as he manages to have two poems, “The Mouse’s Tale” and “Father William”, seamlessly begin on a fresh page, without falling on such crude devices as a bigger writing or larger spacing of lines<sup>75</sup>. Carroll’s creating unit is the page, whether for pictures or text, and invention starts with short fragments, tales, mathematical and logical problems or jokes, which, like pictures, can be globally visualised, though they then have to be organised. Carroll’s passion for indexes, tables, letter or photo registers and other means of classification pervaded all aspects of his life and found its way in his writings, as *Sylvie and Bruno* contains a nonsensical index while the series of chess moves in *Through the Looking-Glass* was provided to the reader as a sort of graphic synopsis<sup>76</sup>. Symptomatic of his vision of books, these indexes are the counterpart of his conception of stories as series of illustrated fragments, which they organise and represent in a tabular manner,

complying again with his need for graphic and global representation rather than linear narrative expression.

The relationship between Carroll and Furniss was not one of equals, since it was Carroll who was employing Furniss, as well as being the older and more famous of the two, but it is mostly Carroll's invasive way of directing the artist which characterises the relationship. Although Carroll tried to spare Furniss' susceptibility, he considered him very much as he did his publisher or his printer, skilled workers who could execute his orders to his satisfaction rather than true partners. Furniss' pictures, as a result of Carroll's influence, do not possess the inventiveness and autonomy of Tenniel's, who for instance made some characters caricatures of famous people or paintings, such as Millais' *My First Sermon* or the portrait of the "Ugly Duchess", but in a way, they belong more truly to Carroll's work. The illustrating process was part and parcel of the genesis of the book as Carroll's work as a writer was of the same visual nature as his work as a photographer, artist, and even logician, since his main contribution was the invention of diagrams which allowed one to solve syllogisms by using graphic representations. By allowing us to describe Carroll's creative processes, the study of the genesis of the *Sylvie and Bruno* opens the way for an analysis of nonsense as the representation of a logical and graphical conception of the world.

### Bibliographie

*Alice's Adventures under Ground*, facsim., London, Macmillan, 1886, and New York, Dover, 1965. [The manuscript is kept by the British Library and can be leafed through virtually on their online gallery, in the "Turning the Pages" project: <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/tpbooks.html>].

Carroll, Lewis, *The Complete Works of Lewis Carroll*, London, Penguin, 1988.

Cohen, Morton & Edward Wakeling, eds., *Lewis Carroll and His Illustrators: Collaborations and Correspondence, 1865-1898*, London, Macmillan, 2003.

Cohen, Morton & Anita Gandolfo, eds., *Lewis Carroll and the House of Macmillan*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987.

*The Letters of Lewis Carroll*, Morton N. Cohen ed., with the assistance of R. L. Green, London, Macmillan, 1979, 2 vols.

*Lewis Carroll's Diaries: The Private Journals of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll), the First Complete Version of the Nine Surviving Volumes*, Edward Wakeling ed., Luton, The Lewis Carroll Society, 1993-2005.

---

<sup>1</sup> L. Carroll, *Diaries* 6, January 16, 1874, in *Lewis Carroll's Diaries: The Private Journals of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll), the First Complete Version of the Nine Surviving Volumes*, notes and annotations by Edward Wakeling, Luton, The Lewis Carroll Society, 1993-2005, p. 314. Future references to the diaries are abbreviated as "Diaries 6", where the numeral refers to the volume, followed by the date of the entry. We have used the pseudonym "Lewis Carroll" for all references, regardless of whether they were written by the man, C. L. Dodgson, or the writer, "Lewis Carroll".

<sup>2</sup> Considering that Holiday was not suitable, Carroll contacted Walter Crane in 1877 (*Ibid.*, 7, p. 85, 103-104), Arthur Frost in 1881 (*Ibid.*, 7, p. 329), mentioned a "Miss Vyvyan" and contacted Randolph Caldecott, W. Ralston, Edwin J. Ellis and Arthur Frost again in 1883 and 1884 (*Ibid.*, 7, p. 517, 529, *Ibid.*, 8, p. 4, 24).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 8, March 1 and 3, 1885, p. 169-170.

<sup>4</sup> L. Carroll, letter to Harry Furniss, March 9, 1885, in *Lewis Carroll and His Illustrators: Collaborations and Correspondence, 1865-1898*, London, Macmillan, 2003, p. 108 (now abbreviated as *Illustrators*).

<sup>5</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Harry Furniss, August 23, 1887, *Ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>6</sup> The illustrations to "Peter and Paul" (L. Carroll, *Diaries* 8, *op. cit.*, September 4, 1885, p. 235), "The Pig's Tale" (L. Carroll, *Illustrators*, *op. cit.*, January 26, 1887, p. 137) and "The Three Badgers" (*Ibid.*, August 21, 1887, p. 139).

<sup>7</sup> "Fairy-Sylvie", "Bruno's Revenge", "Long Ceremonious Calls", "The voices" and "His soul shall be sad for the spider".



<sup>8</sup> This article is based on a study of the genesis of the *Sylvie and Bruno* books which is part of the PhD thesis I am completing under the direction of André Topia at the University Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris III, entitled *Between Logic and Theology. The Spiritual Quest of Lewis Carroll in His Later Works*.

<sup>9</sup> L. Carroll, *Useful and Instructive Poetry*, MS, 1845, published as *Useful and Instructive Poetry*, London, Geoffrey Bles, 1954; *The Rectory Umbrella*, 1850-53, MS, and *Mischmasch*, 1855-62, MS, published as *The Rectory Umbrella and Mischmasch*, New York, Dover, 1971; *The Rectory Magazine*, ed. C. L. D., MS, 1850, facsim., Austin, University Press of Texas, 1975.

<sup>10</sup> L. Carroll, *Diaries 1*, *op. cit.*, August 24, 1855, p. 122-123.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* 2, April 10, 1856, p. 61. The square brackets indicate that Carroll added a comment to his own diary entry at a later date.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* 4, February 10, 1863, p. 95.

<sup>13</sup> Now abbreviated as *Under Ground and Wonderland*.

<sup>14</sup> L. Carroll, *Diaries 4*, *op. cit.*, July 22, 1863, p. 222.

<sup>15</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Tom Taylor, December 20, 1863, in *The Letters of Lewis Carroll*, Morton N. Cohen ed., London, Macmillan, 1979, p. 62.

<sup>16</sup> L. Carroll, *Alice's Adventures under Ground*, facsim., London, Macmillan, 1886 and New York, Dover, 1965. The manuscript can also be virtually leafed through on the British Library's online gallery, in the "Turning the Pages" project: <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/tpbooks.html>

<sup>17</sup> The drawings were described when they were sold at Christie's in 1986. See Jacob L. Chernofsky, "Editor's Corner", in *AB Bookman's Weekly*, 20 (November 17 1986), AB Bookman Publications, p. 1991 & 2022, and Sally Brown, "Lewis Carroll Drawings", *The Antique Collector*, 57 (December 1986), p. 76-77.

<sup>18</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Mr. Craik, November 25, 1876, in *Lewis Carroll and the House of Macmillan*, Cohen, Morton & Anita Gandolfo, eds., Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987, p. 134.

<sup>19</sup> L. Carroll, *Diaries 7*, *op. cit.*, February 4, 1883, p. 517.

<sup>20</sup> Letter from Tenniel, March 8, 1865, *Illustrators*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>21</sup> H. Furniss, *The Confessions of a Caricaturist*, London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1901, p. 93.

<sup>22</sup> The sketches, with Furniss and Carroll's comments, are reproduced in *Illustrators*, *op. cit.*, p. 112, as well as Carroll's own sketches, p. 111, 113.

<sup>23</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, September 21, 1889, *Ibid.*, p. 167.

<sup>24</sup> L. Carroll, Letters to Furniss, October 9, 1889 and October 6, 1893, *Ibid.*, p. 181, 221.

<sup>25</sup> L. Carroll, Letters to Furniss, October 9, 1889, October 12, 1889 and September 8, 1893, *Ibid.*, p. 181, 186, 216.

<sup>26</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, September 3, 1889, *Ibid.*, p. 162.

<sup>27</sup> L. Carroll, Letters to Furniss, September 21 and 30, 1889, *Ibid.*, p. 168, 176.

<sup>28</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, August 25, 1890, *Ibid.*, p. 199.

<sup>29</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, August 30, 1887, *Ibid.*, p. 141-142.

<sup>30</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, September 27, 1889, *Ibid.*, p. 170.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> This can be inferred from Carroll's letters to Furniss, September 3 and 9, 1887, *Ibid.*, p. 148-150.

<sup>33</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, September 30?, 1885, *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>34</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, September 3, 1887, *Ibid.*, p. 148.

<sup>35</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, November 27, 1886, *Ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>36</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, September 9, 1887, *Ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>37</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, August 23, 1887, *Ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>38</sup> L. Carroll, Letters to Furniss, August 23 and September 1, 1887, *Ibid.*, p. 140, 143-147.

<sup>39</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, November 20, 1887, *Ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>40</sup> See for instance, *Ibid.*, p. 111 note, 129 or 130.

<sup>41</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, November 24, 1886, *Ibid.*, p. 126.

<sup>42</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, November 20, 1887, *Ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>43</sup> L. Carroll, Letters to Furniss, August 1889, *Ibid.*, p. 157-160.

<sup>44</sup> Letter from Tenniel, June 1, 1870, *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>45</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, October 12, 1889, *Ibid.*, p. 186.

<sup>46</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, September 8, 1893, *Ibid.*, p. 216.

<sup>47</sup> L. Carroll, *Sylvie and Bruno*, in *The Complete Works of Lewis Carroll*, London, Penguin, 1988, chapter II, p. 271.

<sup>48</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, September?, 1889, *Illustrators*, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

<sup>49</sup> L. Carroll, *Sylvie and Bruno*, *op. cit.*, p. 267, 275.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, respectively p. 379, 545, 388, 535, 541.

- 
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, chapters IV to VI, p. 504-517.
- <sup>52</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, August 11, 1890, *Illustrators*, *op. cit.*, p. 196.
- <sup>53</sup> L. Carroll, *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, *op. cit.*, chapter VII, p. 520.
- <sup>54</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, August 1, 1893, *Illustrators*, *op. cit.*, p. 215.
- <sup>55</sup> See Rosemary Ashton's "The Figure of the German Professor in Nineteenth-Century English Fiction", in *The Novel in Anglo-German Context: Cultural Cross-Currents and Affinities*, ed. Susanne Stark, Amsterdam, Rodopi, 2000, p. 61-74.
- <sup>56</sup> L. Carroll, *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, *op. cit.*, chapter XXII, p. 644-646.
- <sup>57</sup> L. Carroll, Letters to Furniss, September 1, 1887 and October 3, 1889, *Illustrators*, *op. cit.*, p. 145, 177.
- <sup>58</sup> L. Carroll, *Sylvie and Bruno*, *op. cit.*, "Preface", p. 255-256.
- <sup>59</sup> L. Carroll, *Diaries* 8, *op. cit.*, August 26, 1887, p. 359.
- <sup>60</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Tom Taylor, January 25, 1866, *The Letters of Lewis Carroll*, *op. cit.*, p. 85-89. He also sums up those two scenes in his diary, *Diary* 5, *op. cit.*, January 25, 1866, p. 128-129. The play was never completed.
- <sup>61</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Tom Taylor, January 25, 1866, *Ibid.*, p. 86.
- <sup>62</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Tom Taylor, January 25, 1866, *Ibid.*, p. 87.
- <sup>63</sup> See Helmut Gernsheim, *Lewis Carroll, Photographer*, London, Max Parrish and Co., 1949, for an introduction to Carroll's photography, and Roger Taylor and Edward Wakeling, *Lewis Carroll: Photographer*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2002.
- <sup>64</sup> Reproduced in Taylor and Wakeling, *Ibid.*, p. 68.
- <sup>65</sup> Allan C. Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, Charlottesville and London, University Press of Virginia, 1992, p. 29.
- <sup>66</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, September 3, 1887, *Illustrators*, *op. cit.*, p. 148.
- <sup>67</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Maud Standen, August 28, 1890, *The Letters of Lewis Carroll*, *op. cit.*, p. 802.
- <sup>68</sup> L. Carroll, *Diaries* 8, *op. cit.*, July 29, 1888, p. 415.
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, August 4, 1888, p. 416.
- <sup>70</sup> L. Carroll, Letters to Furniss, August 25 and September 23, 1890, *Illustrators*, *op. cit.*, p. 199, 200-202.
- <sup>71</sup> L. Carroll, Letter to Furniss, September 3, 1889, *Ibid.*, p. 161.
- <sup>72</sup> L. Carroll, *Diaries* 8, *op. cit.*, September 9, 1889, p. 483.
- <sup>73</sup> L. Carroll, *Ibid.* 5, December 9, 1864, p. 27-28.
- <sup>74</sup> S. H. Williams, *Some Rare Carrolliana*, printed for private circulation, London, 1924, p. 14-15.
- <sup>75</sup> L. Carroll, *Alice's Adventures under Ground*, *op. cit.*, p. 27-28, 51-52.
- <sup>76</sup> The complete index was only reproduced in Fanny Deleuze's translation, *Sylvie et Bruno*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1972. For the partial index to the first volume, one must refer to the original 1889 Macmillan edition.